

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 AMMAN 04705 241208Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PA-01 ICA-11 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 /046 W

-----099710 241211Z /53

P R 241110Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6219
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4705

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS:PDIP, JO, US
SUBJECT: KING HUSSEIN TO MARRY JUNE 15

1. IN HALF HOUR PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 23, ATTENDED BY
ALMOST ONE-HUNDRED JOURNALISTS, KING HUSSEIN AND MISS NOOR
(FORMERLY LISA) HALABY ANNOUNCED THEY WILL MARRY JUNE 15
"AS MUSLIMS, HASHEMITES AND ARABS".

2. IN SHORT STATEMENT, KING SAID HIS MARRIAGE WAS
SOURCE OF HAPPINESS AND STRENGTH. HIS LIEF HAD BEEN
FULL OF CHALLENGES AND TRAGEDIES; ONLY A YEAR AGO HE
WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SUCH A HAPPY TURN IN HIS LIFE
IMPOSSIBLE. KING EMPHASIZED HIS ADMIRATION FOR MISS
HALABY'S INTELLIGENCE AND HER CONCERN FOR OTHER HUMAN
BEINGS. NOTING THAT HE AND NAJEEB HALABY HAD BEEN
FRIENDS FOR MANY YEARS0 HUSSEIN SAID HE HAD LONG
RESPECTED AND ADMIRER HIM AS AN AVIATOR, ARAB-AMERICAN
AND MAN-OF-THE-WORLD. HE HAD KNOWN MISS HALABY, HE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 04705 241208Z

SAID, FOR YEAR AND A HALF -- THEIR AFFECTION FOR EACH
OTHER WAS NOT SUDDEN DEVELOPMENT BUT "GENUINE, LOGICAL
AND MEANINGFUL". KING PLEADED WITH ASSEMBLED JOURNA-
LISTS NOT TO TREAT MARRIAGE SHALLOWLY OR SUPERFICIALLY
BUT WITH SOME OF THE RESPECT, WARMTH AND MEANINGFULNESS
HE HIMSELF FELT.

3. IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS, ROYAL COUPLE SAID WEDDING WOULD BE SMALL AND PRIVATE WITH ONLY FAMILY AND FEW VERY CLOSE FRIENDS IN ATTENDANCE, SOME OF WHOM WOULD BE COMING FROM U.S. HONEYMOON PLANS HAVE NOT YET BEEN MADE, BUT WOULD PROBABLY BE DIVIDED BETWEEN JORDAN AND SOME TRAVEL ABROAD. (THERE HAVE BEEN SPECULATIVE INTERNATIONAL PRESS REPORTS THAT PLANS MAY INCLUDE VISIT TO U.S.)

4. ON WHAT HALABY'S TITLE WOULD BE UPON HER MARRIAGE, HUSSEIN WAS VERY CIRCUMSPECT, SAYING IT WOULD BE "THE TITLE USUALLY HELD BY THE WIFE OF A KING -- WIFE AND PARTNER IN LIFE". HE ADDED THAT SPECULATION ON THIS SCORE WITH REFERENCE TO THE CONSTITUTION OR JORDANIAN LAW WAS MEANINGLESS SINCE SUBJECT NOT LEGALLY ADDRESSED ANYWHERE. COMMENT: IN ANY CASE, CONSTITUTION LIMITS SUCCESSION AS CHIEF OF STATE TO MALE MEMBERS OF HASHEMITE DYNASTY. END COMMENT.

5. SPECULATION INCREASING DAILY THAT NOOR HALABY WILL BE NAMED QUEEN. INDEED MANY JORDANIANS SUSPECT KING HUSSEIN WANTS TO NAME HER QUEEN BUT IS NOW ONLY FLOATING IDEA TO GAUGE LOCAL REACTION. REACTION WE HAVE HEARD SO FAR IS THAT MANY JORDANIANS WOULD PREFER THAT TITLING FOLLOW PRECEDENT SET BY ONLY PREVIOUS NON-ARAB WIFE, PRINCESS MUNA, ALTHOUGH SOME MAINTAIN MUNA PH

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 AMMAN 04705 241208Z

FFERED BUT REFUSED TITLE OF QUEEN.
KING'S NON-COMMITAL RESPONSE HAS FUELED RUMOR.

6. REGARDING MISS HALABY'S CITIZENSHIP, KING REPLIED "JORDANIAN, OF COURSE". BOTH APPEARED GENUINELY SURPRISED AT QUESTION OF GIVING UP HER U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND MISS HALABY REPLIED SHE HAD NO IDEA WHAT WOULD HAPPEN ON THAT SCORE.

7. HOW DID MISS HALABY AS A CAREER WOMAN FEEL ABOUT HER NEW ROLE? IT WOULD A CAREER IN ITSELF AND A CHALLENGE SHE HOPED HER EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE WOULD HELP HER MEET. WITH GUIDANCE AND COUNSEL OF HIS MAJESTY, SHE SAID, SHE HOPES TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRY, WITH SOME EMPHASIS ON PROBLEMS OF THE CITIES -- HER PARTICULAR FIELD OF INTEREST.

8. IN SEPARATE QUESTIONING IN ARABIC, HUSSEIN REPEATED REMARKS DELIVERED IN ENGLISH WITH SOME EMPHASIS ON FIANCEE'S ARAB ORIGINS. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON

HER ARABIC LANGUAGE ABILITIES, KING REPLIED SHE UNDERSTANDS ARABIC WELL BUT WOULD BE STUDYING AND PRACTICING FURTHER TO IMPROVE HER SPOKEN ARABIC. SHE HOWEVER DECLINED REQUEST THAT SHE SAY A FEW WORDS IN ARABIC.

9. HARD-BITTEN PRESS CORPS (TOLD BEFORE-HAND THAT NO POLITICAL QUESTIONS WOULD BE PERMITTED) WARMED TO OCCASION WITH MISS HALABY'S INITIAL PLEA THAT SHE WOULD BE HAPPY TO ANSWER QUESTIONS BUT HOPED EVERYONE WOULD REALIZE THAT THIS WAS HER FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH PUBLIC LIFE AND SHE MIGHT NOT BE AS "ARTICULATE AND SMOOTH" AS SHE WOULD LIKE. THAT SAID, SHE HANDLED VERY WELL QUESTIONS ON WHEN AND HOW KING HAD PROPOSED TO HER AND WHAT SHE CALLS HIS MAJESTY IN PRIVATE. (SHE ANSWERED CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 AMMAN 04705 241208Z

FIRST QUESTION AND -- WITH A BIG SMILE -- DECLINED TO ANSWER SECOND.) ONLY ATTEMPT TO INJECT POLITICS INTO PRESS CONFERENCE WAS QUESTION ON WHETHER HAPPY OCCASION OF WEDDING WOULD BE MARKED BY SUCH PUBLIC EVENTS AS GENERAL AMNESTY FOR PRISONERS. (SEE AMMAN 4675 - NOTAL).
REPLY: "ALL IN GOOD TIME, MY FRIEND."

10. COMMENT: GOJ PUBLICITY REGARDING KING HUSSEIN - LISA HALABY ENGAGEMENT HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO EMPHASIZE ARAB CHARACTER OF THE WEDDING ALLIANCE AND TO TREAT FORTHCOMING MARRIAGE IN LOW KEY AND DISCREET FASHION. THERE HAS THUS FAR BEEN LITTLE DISTINCTIVE PUBLIC REACTION TO THE ENGAGEMENT, BUT WE ANTICIPATE THERE WILL BE CONSIDERABLY MORE DISCUSSION AS WEDDING APPROACHES PARTICULARLY ON QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT KING WILL MAKE HIS ARAB-AMERICAN BRIDE A QUEEN.
SUDDARTH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KING, MARRIAGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978AMMAN04705
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780218-0992
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780526/aaaaavpq.tel
Line Count: 153
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d174c397-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2595186
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KING HUSSEIN TO MARRY JUNE 15
TAGS: PDIP, JO, US, (HUSSEIN I), (HALABY, LISA), (HALABY, NOOR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d174c397-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014